



Red Falcons improve way through RC South
Page 8

Pakistan earthquake assistance routed through Afghanistan
Page 4



ANA train on American artillery
Page 5



THE PATRIOT



Vol 1, Issue 12

A CJTF-76 Publication

October 15, 2005



A paratrooper with Company C, 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment watches over Afghan National Army troops on patrol Sept. 12 during Operation Nimegan. Operation Nimegan was a joint operation in Zormat conducted by ANA soldiers and paratroopers from 2nd Bn.

Story and photo by Sgt. Chuck D. Meseke
TF Devil Public Affairs

ZORMAT - Paratroopers from 2nd Battalion, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, and Afghan National Army soldiers conducted security patrols and searched for criminals Sept. 12 - 14, throughout the Zormat area.

Operation Nijmegen kicked off with Paratroopers moving in to a village suspected to be housing an enemy organizer.

Staff Sgt. Henry S. Centeno, a Modesto, Calif. native and squad leader with Company C, 2nd Bn., spoke with local villagers to gather information about the organizer, but the villager would not give a straight answer.

"You just said a minute ago you hadn't seen him in a year, now you are saying you don't know him?" Centeno asked.

"They are lying," he said to Sgt. Joseph P. Hebert, a team leader with Co. C. "Am I supposed to believe that they don't know the guy when they are living in his compound?"

Hebert agreed; there would be no choice

but to search the village with ANA troops.

As the Afghan Soldiers searched each room, Hebert followed afterward supervising his Afghan counterparts.

The search yielded little results aside from a suspicious propaganda cassette tape. The tape was found by a female searcher who noticed a woman waiting to be searched was acting strangely. The woman was searched and the tape uncovered.

Some of the paratroopers said they could tell from the start of the mission how it was going to turn out.

"The people staring at us, not smiling and waving; you can tell it isn't going to be a good mission," said Pfc. Ken Orisek, a Chicago native and squad automatic weapon gunner with Co. C.

Paratroopers made the best of the operation even though there were no tangible results.

"We try to have a good time regardless, and it is nice to help the ANA along with their progress," Orisek said.

After the search of the village was com-

pleted, the troops headed out to a local bazaar that was rumored to be frequented by enemy forces looking for supplies to sustain their terrorism tactics against Afghanistan and Coalition Forces.

Nothing was found at the market, but a clear message was sent according to Capt. Jody Shouse, a Fayetteville, N.C. native and Co. C commander. The enemy would have to do their shopping somewhere else, thanks to ANA soldiers.

The operation did validate the ANA and showed the local Afghans that Afghan and Coalition forces care about their district.

"The locals need to see their soldiers actively involved in operations," said 2nd Lt. Michael Filanowski a Shelton, Conn. native and platoon leader with Company C.

"Today we helped these Afghans become better soldiers," he added.

As the operation wrapped up, ANA soldiers distributed truckloads of humanitarian assistance items to a local village elder that had helped the troops on previous missions in the area.

Visit CJTF-76 on the web at www.cjtf76.army.mil

Coalition Voices / Opinion

Stop, look, listen

By Master Sgt. Geoffrey Carter

Task Force Devil Public Affairs

I had a catharsis today, and no, it didn't hurt. I learned something about human nature, myself and what is most important is how it was learned. I listened.

I don't always listen, but I do make a conscience effort to improve everyday. Did you know that the average person spends 70 percent of their waking day in verbal communication and 45 percent of that time is spent listening. Yet, unless you've had specific training in listening techniques your efficiency in use of this skill is only at a 25 percent level.

Dr. Paul Rankin of Ohio State University discovered we spend 70 percent of our day in four types of verbal communication. Of this 70 percent, 9 percent is spent in writing, 16 percent in reading, 30 percent in speaking, and 45 percent listening. Our American school system, however, has its emphasis in reverse order. This is why we have such a hard

time listening and hearing people.

The consequences of poor communication and listening are numerous, costly and frightening. Think of the impact to your unit or organization if work is misdirected, goals misunderstood and not achieved, instructions carried out incorrectly or not at all, or if relationships and trust are weakened instead of strengthened. Not a pretty picture. The following are a couple of areas to avoid that make you a bad listener:

1) When you're introducing a speaker as having a subject that is interesting it turns off the listener. They want to make up their own mind.

2) When you begin to criticize a speaker's delivery your mind starts to tune into some other subject.

3) Don't get over stimulated or too excited about people and things. If they say something that you don't agree with, you start to mentally prepare a challenge and miss other points to their conversation that may have answered your challenge.

4) Don't tolerate distraction. You need to ignore the audio and visual distractions and stay focused on the presentation

5) Wasting thought power is probably the biggest distraction to good listening. On the average, Americans speak 125 words a minute. When we speak to a group, we may slow down to 100 words per minute. People listen at between 400-500 words per minute and sometimes as many as 750. In other words, if a speaker maintains an average speed of 150 words per minute, then listeners will want to go somewhere mentally at a pace five times that of the speaker.

So, when you hear that a speaker has lost their audience it is not as much the subject matter as it is the speaker's slow delivery. This is why our average listening efficiency level is only 25 percent. To improve this we need to concentrate on what the speaker has to say, commit to learning something new and make mental summaries of key points. Do you hear what I'm saying?

President's Ramadan message

Laura and I send warm greetings to Muslims in the United States and throughout the world as they begin the observance of Ramadan.

The month of Ramadan, which commemorates the revelation of the Qur'an to the prophet Muhammed, is the holiest month of the Muslim year. It is a special time of reflection, fasting, and charity. It is also a time of spiritual growth and prayer and an occasion to remember the less fortunate by sharing God's gifts with those in need.

Throughout our history, America has been blessed by the contributions of people of many different faiths. Our Muslim citizens have helped make our Nation a stronger and more hopeful place through their faith, generosity, and compassion.

May this be a blessed Ramadan for Muslims in the United States and around the world. Ramadan mubarak.

GEORGE W. BUSH

Not over, not forgotten

By Spc. Jon H. Arguello

*TF Bayonet
Public Affairs*

KANDAHAR AIR FIELD – For two years, an attempt by the United States to end terrorist activities in Afghanistan has been replaced in mainstream media outlets by the larger simultaneous conflict in Iraq.

News about the progress being made has been slowly smothered by news of improvised explosive devices and suicide bombers taking a toll on our brave Soldiers in a simultaneous conflict in the Middle East. As important as the news in Iraq may be, it is equally important to make note of the progress, sacrifice and victories of our troops in Afghanistan.

When the war to eradicate Al Qaeda terrorists and to remove the Taliban regime sheltering them began, Americans

had visions of Vietnam running through their minds. They heard and repeated stories of the failed Russian invasion of Afghanistan. Afghanistan, a country with unforgiving terrain and punishing weather, had also defeated the British in two failed attempts to conquer the country and seize control of an important trading route at the time.

Before the terrorists could be found and fought, Soldiers would have to breach the elements, the media said. Once, they were found, Soldiers would be at a disadvantage because the enemy would outmaneuver us, the media said.

It is unclear whether the climax of the media's efforts was the reporting of how difficult, practically

impossible, the attempt to curb terrorism from the region was, or the fact that U.S. troops were about to be sent to war. So the troops were sent to war, practically as underdogs, with much support from Americans, but little from the American media.

"There are nearly 20,000 American Soldiers and their families who are reminded on a daily basis of our commitment to end terrorism as a threat."

Four years later, American Soldiers and Coalition forces have seen an incredible change of events. After numerous substantial victories on the battlefield and fewer but equally important political victories, including successful and relatively peaceful parliamentary elections, the successful

war in Afghanistan struggles to reach the mainstream media.

American Soldiers have braved the elements, traversed the terrain and defeated large and small numbers of rebels in close combat – consistently. Coalition troops have secured an exponentially safer Afghanistan, and more importantly eliminated the Al Qaeda presence, decimated the Taliban's

infrastructure, and wreaked havoc on their recruiting. Simultaneously, we have bridged cultural barriers and made strong Afghan allies. Still, the news of our success in Afghanistan struggles to be heard.

Although the war in Afghanistan is a demonstration of how to fight an

insurgency, and our successes here are plentiful, we simply have not sustained as many American casualties as the war in Iraq, so our story hides in Iraq's shadow. Still, I hesitate to say the war is forgotten. There are nearly 20,000 American Soldiers and their families who are reminded on a daily basis of our commitment to end terrorism as a threat.

The fact is, neither the Soldiers who bear the weight and sacrifice of winning this war, nor the families who support them, would trade any amount of coverage of their good deeds and successes for one flag draped casket. After six months of covering the war from behind, around and at the front lines, I know the war is not over but I also know this is a good cause and most importantly I know we are winning this war and that's all I need.

Across Afghanistan / CJTF - 76



A crew at Forward Operating Base Salerno work to replace the cab of a medium tactical vehicle with an armored one Sept. 26.

Story and photo by Sgt. Adrian Schulte
CJTF-76 Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO - When "Monster Garage" meets the War on Terror, you not only get a beastly looking machine, you also get a life-saving apparatus.

A team of mechanics from L3 Vertex Aerospace out of Oklahoma City came to Afghanistan in May to refit medium and light tactical vehicles along with some humvee with armor kits. The teams ranging from 23 to 36 mechanics have worked out of Bagram and Kandahar Airfields as well as forward operating bases Orgun-E and Salerno.

In their time in Afghanistan, they have refitted 197 vehicles with armor.

Most of the kits consist of prefabricated truck cabs which come fully intact. For most of the trucks, the mechanics replace the old cabs with the newer, up-armored ones in a two-day process, according to Jim VanGorder, L3 Vertex Aerospace site supervisor for Afghanistan.

"These cabs have done very well with mines," said VanGorder referring to one of the most common perils faced by drivers on the roads of Afghanistan and Iraq. He went on to recall one instance in Iraq where one of the up-armored trucks hit a "double stack" mine sending the vehicle on its side. The Soldiers inside walked away from the incident.

Most of the mechanics working on the vehicles are actually helicopter mechanics, VanGorder said. They came from all over the United States and volunteered for this assignment to get their foot in the door for an aviation maintenance spot in the company.

While the assignment may send some of these mechanics on to other, more permanent positions, they are also proud of the work they are doing.

"This is a good thing, it's a good mission," VanGorder said. "I'll tell you, the ultimate reward is to have guys come back and say 'Thanks, I feel better about what's going on.' I really like to see the guys drive outside the wire with armor."

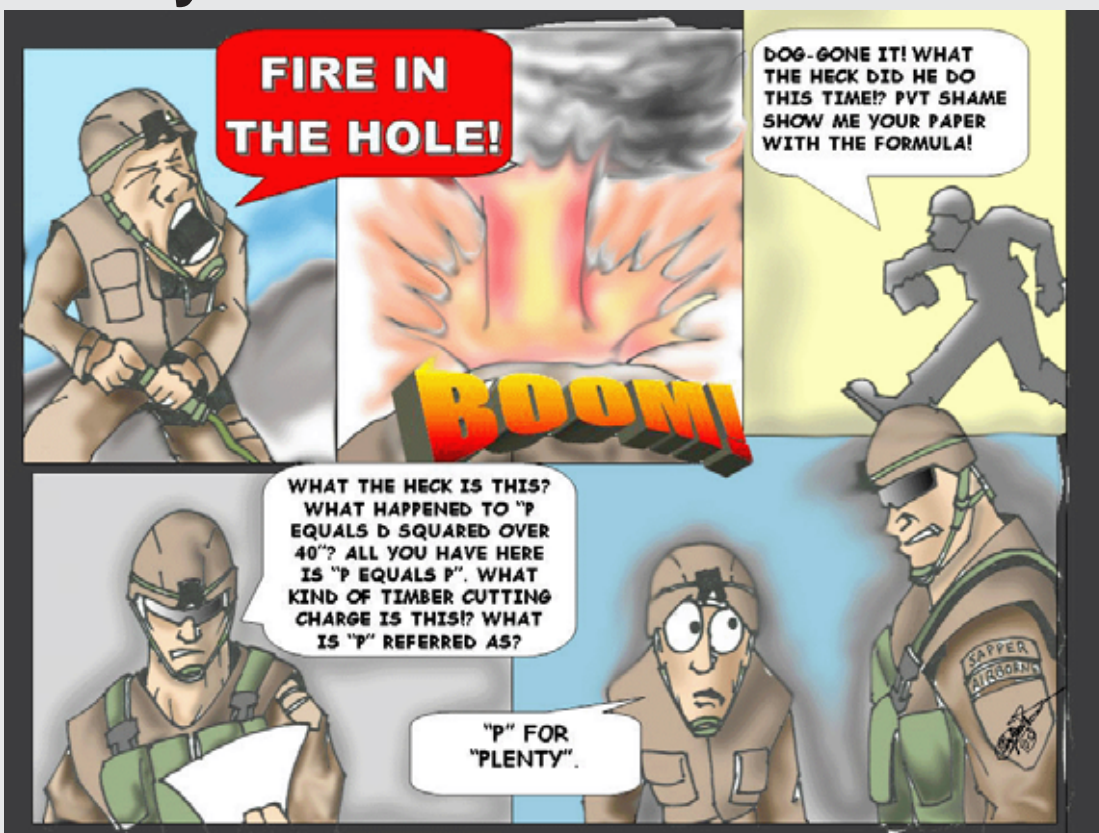
The mechanics take their jobs seriously and will work through the night in many cases to fit a mission-bound vehicle with armor.

"I'm only 21 and most of the Soldiers out here are my age," said Michael Lavender, a wheeled mechanic for L3 Vertex Aerospace. "I feel kind of bad for not joining the military and serving my country but coming out here doing this makes me feel really good, because yeah I'm making good money, but my motivation comes out of the fact that in each one of these cabs Soldiers' lives are protected."

The L3 Vertex Aerospace mechanics will be in Afghanistan until November to finish their mission. At that time the job will be passed on to another contractor.

Reality Check

By Staff Sgt. Bryan Dorman



THE PATRIOT

October 15, 2005 Vol. 1 Issue 15

CJTF-76
Commander
Maj. Gen. Jason Kamiya
CJTF-76
Public Affairs Officer

Lt. Col. Jerry O'Hara
Editor

Sgt. Tara Teel
Sgt. Adrian Schulte

The Patriot is an unofficial publication authorized and provided by AR 360-1. All editorial content of The Patriot is prepared, edited, provided and approved by the CJTF-76 Public Affairs Office, Bagram Airfield. DSN 318-231-4356.

Email: schulte@cjtf76.centcom.mil
The Patriot is published on the 1st and 15th of every month by the CJTF-76 Public Affairs Office.

Editorial publication is an authorized section for members of Coalition forces serving in Afghanistan. Contents of The Patriot are not necessarily the official views of, or endorsed by, the U.S. government, Department of Defense, Department of the Army or Combined Joint Task Force-76.

The editor reserves the right to edit all submissions for style, brevity and clarity.



Camp dedication marks Navy birthday

To help commemorate the Navy's 230th birthday, a section of Bagram Airfield was renamed Camp McCool at a ceremony Oct. 13. The camp was named after a Navy pilot who was a crew member on the ill-fated Columbia space shuttle which broke apart during reentry Feb. 1, 2003. (Photo by Navy Lt. Larry Franco)

Across Afghanistan / CJTF-76



3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and 2nd Battalion helicopters from Bagram Airfield and Kandahar Airfield touch down on Qasim Army Airfield, Pakistan, to assist in the humanitarian aid effort Oct. 10 for the victims of the earthquake Oct. 8. (Photos by Staff Sgt. Ken Denny, Freedom Watch)

CFC-A Press Release

KABUL – U. S. forces continue their response to provide earthquake rescue, recovery and relief in Pakistan.

Monday, five CH-47 Chinook and three UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters from the 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and 2nd Battalion, 6th Cavalry Regiment at Bagram Airfield arrived in Islamabad, Pakistan, to assist with recovery operations in the wake of Saturday’s devastating earthquake. Additionally, a C-17 and its crew from the 7th Airlift Squadron, McChord Air Force Base, Wash., delivered 12 pallets — weighing almost 90,000 pounds — of food, water, medicine and blankets from Bagram. So far, 18 pallets of relief supplies have been transported by air to Pakistan along with essential personnel



A Pakisani soldier directs 3rd Battalion, 158th Aviation Regiment and 2nd Battalion helicopters as they touch down on Qasim Army Airfield, Pakistan, after flying from Bagram Airfield, Afghanistan.



Airmen and Soldiers prepares to unload humanitarian supplies from a C-17 Globemaster in Islamabad, Pakistan, Oct. 10.

needed to assist with recovery operations.

The helicopters continue to take off from Bagram Airfield ferring supplies and injured people to and from earthquake stricken areas. Additionally, C-130 Hercules and C-17 Globemaster aircraft will transport 30 pallets of relief supplies to a Pakistan Army Airfield near Islamabad.

U. S. personnel are currently working with Pakistan military personnel to determine where they are most needed.

“Our total focus is on relieving the suffering in Pakistan, help them stabilize and, in the longer term, recover,” said Lt. Gen. Karl Eikenberry, Combined Forces Command-Afghanistan commanding general.

Army leaders visit the CJOA



(Above) Sgt. Maj. of the Army Kenneth Preston visits troops at Forward Operating Base Salerno during a trip around Afghanistan. (Left) Gen. B.B. Bell, U.S. Army Europe commanding general, visits troops at Kandahar Airfield last week. (Photos courtesy of TF Bayonet Public Affairs)

Regional Command East / Task Force Devil

Here comes the Boom!

ANA get up close, personal with American artillery

Story and photos by
Sgt. Adrian Schulte
CJTF-76 Public Affairs

FORWARD OPERATING BASE SALERNO - The concussion vibrated through Mohammed Latif's body. The American artillery can accurately rain destruction from up to 30 kilometers away and Latif felt the power of the American artillery first hand as the gun belched a loud blast. After the smoke had cleared, a smile crept across Latif's face.

For Afghan National Army mortar men, the opportunity to see American artillery at work came in the form of a visit to Forward Operating Base Salerno and the paratroopers of Charlie Battery, 3rd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment Sept. 29.

The Americans and Afghans did some cross training on the 82nd Airborne Division's M198 155mm Medium Towed Howitzers and were taught how to call for fire from an observation post in an effort to foster better relations between the two armies and to improve the Afghan Army's ability to use artillery assets.

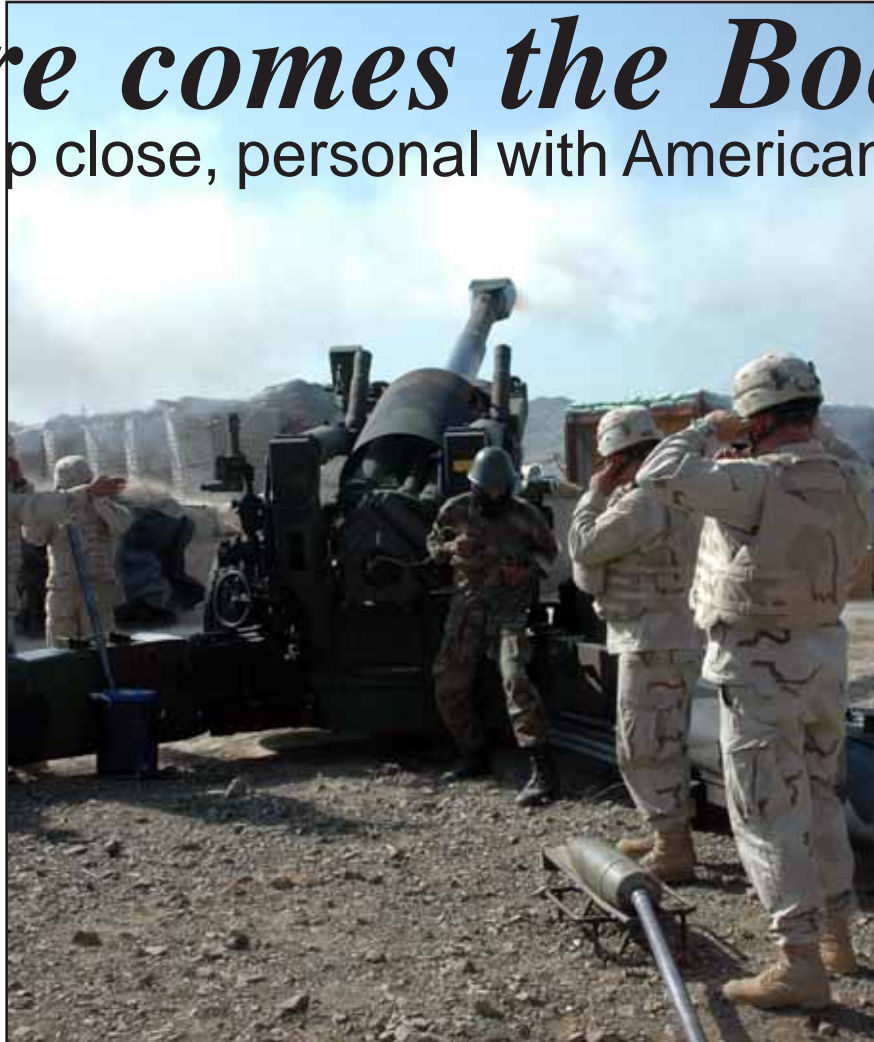
"They (ANA) shoot mortars and have never shot the big guns, so they wanted to come here and cross train with us," said Staff Sgt. Joshua Kazaka, artilleryman, Charlie Battery, 3rd Battalion, 319th Field Artillery Regiment.

The paratroopers began the day by showing their Afghan counterparts how to occupy a position in under six minutes with their howitzer. They then broke down into two groups and walked the Afghan soldiers step by step through the different stages of setting up the gun and firing it.

Afghan soldiers were also loaded into a UH-60 Helicopter and inserted into an observation post where they would act as forward observers and call back to the firing point to request a fire mission from their fellow Afghans.

"We showed them the different rounds we shoot and how we shoot with crew drills," said Kazaka. "We broke down everybody's job. The only thing that kicked their butt was trying to lift (the Gun) up."

The groups then got their chance to feel the might of American artillery as each Afghan soldier



An Afghan soldier pulls the lanyard on a M198 155mm Medium Towed Howitzer during a cross-training event with the paratroopers of Charlie Battery, 3rd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment at Forward Operating Base Salerno Sept. 29.



Afghan mortarman Mohammed Latif loads a round into a M198 155mm Medium Towed Howitzer during a cross-training event with the paratroopers of Charlie Battery, 3rd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment at Forward Operating Base Salerno Sept. 29.



(Left) Afghan mortarman Mohammed Latif prepares to pull the lanyard on a M198 155mm Medium Towed Howitzer during a cross-training event with the paratroopers of Charlie Battery, 3rd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment. (Right) Staff Sgt. Joshua Kazaka points out some features on a M198 155mm Medium Towed Howitzer to ANA troops.

got the chance to work with the American teams ramming the projectile, loading the powder, inserting the primer, and firing the howitzers. They returned to their buddies smiling and laughing as they talked about their experience after each Afghan had their turn.

"The best part is always the shooting," Kazaka said. "Watching their faces after they pulled the lanyard, just the way they jump with the look on their face like 'I just shot that?' That is the best."

"I like the way that Americans train," said Afghan mortar man Mohammed Latif, who joined the ANA a year ago. "It was too cool. I loved pulling the lanyard and actually firing the gun."

For both the Americans and Afghans, the day provided more than a loud bang and a ringing in their ears. It gave the opportunity to learn about each other and about what it takes to accomplish a mission.

For the paratroopers, it gave them a chance to meet some of their newest allies in the war on terror.

"Just working with the ANA was the best thing for my Soldiers," Kazaka said. "We've seen them around the FOB, but this is the first time we have intermingled with them. So that was awesome. You can tell that they are good people."

For the Afghans, the day showed the importance teamwork plays in the American Army.

"If they walk away learning one thing it would be how to work together," said

Kazaka. "Because this gun right here is all about teamwork. When they first got out here, they were trying to do everything individually. I kept on telling them that you had to work together. You can't shoot this gun unless you have teamwork."

The Americans and Afghans worked together as a team today on Salerno. As the day ended and they parted company, the Afghans took that message of teamwork back to their unit where it will be used in future missions alongside of their Coalition allies.

The paratroopers plan to expand this training program in the future and establish a partnership with the Combat Support Kandak artillery units in Regional Command East.

Regional Command East / Task Force Devil

A pillar of dependability

Story and photos by
Sgt. Adrian Schulte
CJTF-76 Public Affairs

SALERNO - While the combat arms troops continue to clear Afghanistan of enemy forces and the provisional reconstruction teams help rebuild the infrastructure, equally important are the Soldiers who provide the logistical and medical support to the war fighters during the Global War on Terrorism.

Many of those critical links in Operation Enduring Freedom are made up of Soldiers from Logistical Task Force 307 based out of Forward Operating Base Salerno, Afghanistan.

LTF 307 is comprised of Soldiers from the 307th Forward Support Battalion out of Fort Bragg, N.C., and of the 69th Transportation Company out of Germany. They are a pillar of support for the Coalition forces of Eastern Afghanistan.

"The task force provides all aspects of logistics, maintenance, medical and transportation support to Regional Command East and Task Force Devil," said Maj. Andre Danwin, LTF 307 executive officer. "They also have been known to support Special Forces and the Afghan Kandak forces."

The bulk of the Soldiers arrived in May, and have been busy performing their normal duties as well as tackling the extra responsibilities pushed on them as a deployed force. Whether it is pulling guard duty or providing female Soldiers to maneuver units dealing with Afghan women, the task force is operating above and beyond what is normally asked of them. The unit that normally supports three battalions at Fort Bragg is responsible for the equivalent of eight battalions in Afghanistan.

"We've got a lot of Soldiers going forward not doing their normal [jobs] helping the maneuver elements," Danwin said. "So my paratroopers, besides doing their supply jobs, their maintenance jobs, and their medical jobs, are forward getting into where they are needed."

The task force is broken up into four companies. Dubbed the Diablos, Mad Dogs, Witch Doctors and Road Runners, they provide a full spectrum of support for their area of responsibility.

Diablos

The Diablos of Alpha Company provide the supply support activity and are the distribution point of sorts for the units operating in Eastern Afghanistan.



Mechanic Pfc. Justin Palmer cranks a wrench on a humvee while shop foreman, Sgt. Matthew Haynes, looks on at Forward Operating Base Salerno Sept. 28. The Bravo Company Soldiers help keep trucks up and running on the rugged Afghan roads, which is not an easy feat.



Sgt. Gardimy Fleurius, Alpha Company, LTF 307, processes parts to be shipped to the forward operating bases around Eastern Afghanistan.

"We warehouse all classes of supply provided locally here. So if a unit needs anything from chemlights to support for the dining facilities here, it all comes through this central receiving point," Danwin said. "It's a whole scope of supply."

The company also provides ammunition, petroleum and water, which are all necessities for combating the enemy. A parachute rigger section that is based out of Bagram Airfield so far has dropped 350 containerized delivery systems. The containers can deliver anything from humanitarian supplies to ammunition and food.

The Diablos also bring cooks to the battlefield. Since they aren't needed on Salerno because of the Kellogg Brown and Root support, they have been pushed out to sup-

port the Marines.

Mad Dogs

Maintenance is a constant concern in the rugged climate and terrain of Afghanistan. The paratroopers of Bravo Company are working hard to ensure that every piece of equipment on Salerno and the surrounding area is up and running, and in good working order.

"When any piece of equipment is beyond basic maintenance, I have the mechanical experts do whatever needs to be done to get that piece of equipment going," said Danwin. "They can diagnose and actually fix the problems with vehicles, radios, radar equipment... the whole gamut."

Because the units are so spread out across the regional command, the LTF 307 maintenance company has been broken up forming small maintenance support teams. These teams are spread across the command allowing repair capabilities to the maneuver battalions.

Spc. Peter Stahlschmidt, a metal worker with B Co., said he is proud of the everyday support his company is providing the task force and giving them exactly what they need to accomplish the mission.

Witch Doctors

A healthy Soldier is a happy Soldier – or at least one that can better accomplish his or her job. The paratroopers of Charlie Company are there to ensure the force is healthy. They also provide support for medical civic assistance missions to the surrounding areas.

"We are doing a lot of patient care helping Soldiers and doing a lot of local national care as well," said Sgt. Pablo Colon, C Co. healthcare specialist.

The company's main job is the health and welfare of the Soldiers on the FOB, said Colon. They run sick call and missions to different FOBs.

"Anything they do here activity wise that they might need medical support, we provide," he said.

The company also provides preventive medicine teams, which can health risks to the troops and find ways to contain them.

"Like if you hear about a bunch of malaria cases, I'll send out a preventive medicine team to assess the situation and spray for mosquitoes or whatnot," said Danwin.

This is a unique experience for the support battalion paratroopers as it gives them hands-on experience in their jobs.

"We do a lot of training in the 82nd, but being that I'm in an FSB (forward support battalion), we don't get to do a lot of hands on with people," said Colon. "I'm proud of being able to do something that is making a difference here. Even if it's a little bit, it's a difference regardless."

Road Runners

While the 307th FSB comes fully equipped out of Fort Bragg, for this deployment they decided to give their weary truck drivers a break

See LTF Page 7

Regional Command East / Task Force Devil

**Story and photos by
Spc. Laura E. Griffin**
Task Force Devil Public Affairs

SHARAN PROVINCIAL RECONSTRUCTION TEAM – “Ready, three, two, one, flip” said Lt. Col. Gordon Obermueller, the Sharan Provincial Reconstruction Team commander.

Afghans gathered in downtown Sharan, Afghanistan, turned their eyes skyward to feel the warm glow of streetlights for the first time.

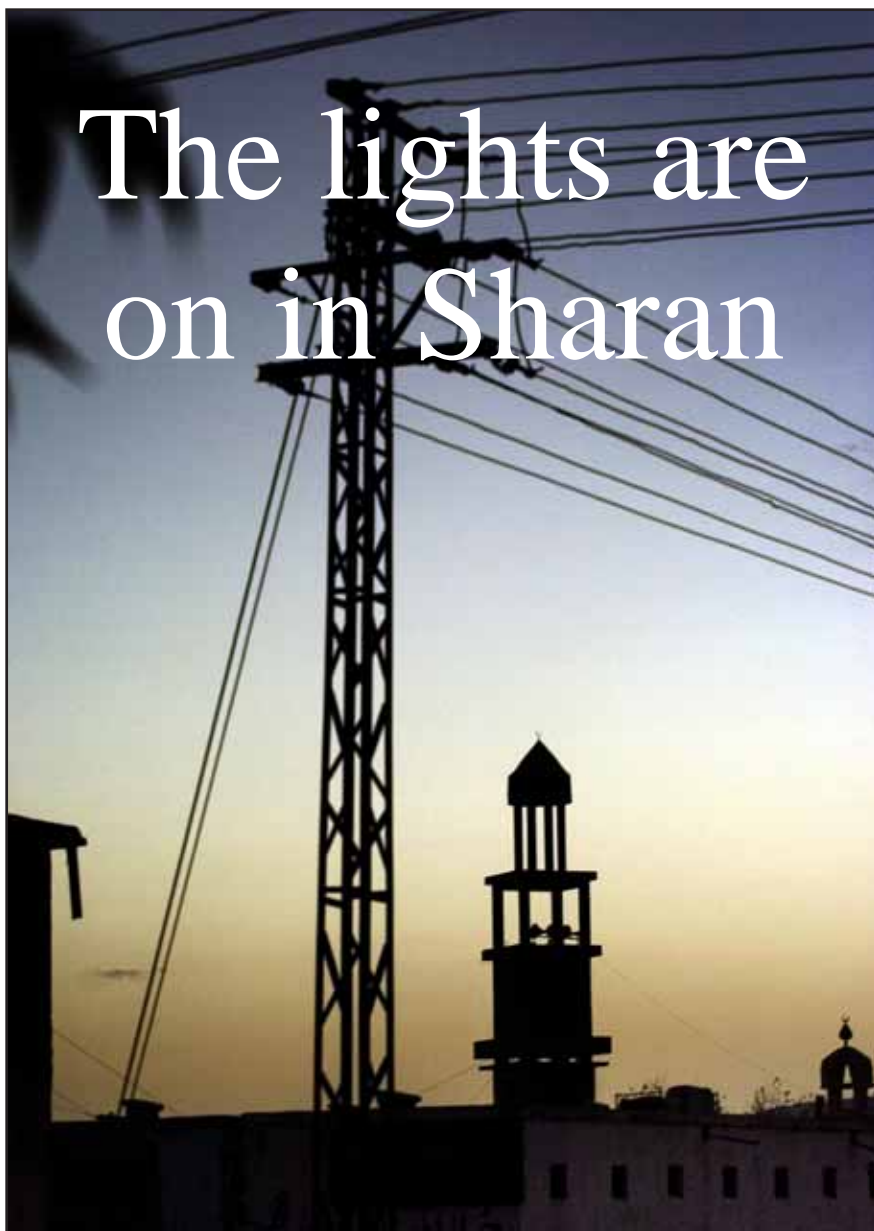
It was just about three hours after the last polling stations closed Sept. 18 that Obermueller and Governor Gulab Mangal, governor of Paktika Province, flipped on the switch for the new power grid in Sharan.

The power grid, with its 11 kilometers of power lines and 65 power polls, services 200 shops in the town, the 24-room Sharan Hospital and some 700 residences in the area.

“We started this project Aug. 15 and employed 953 people, including 630 skilled workers,” said Staff Sgt. Robert Borden, a project coordinator with the 492nd Civil Affairs Battalion. “Most of our projects usually have a ratio of nine unskilled workers to one skilled worker, but this was such a knowledge-intense project that we needed many more skilled workers.”

“This project went fairly smooth, right up until the end when we had a little fuel problem with the generator,” said Borden. “But with the helpful advice from some Kellogg, Brown and Root generator mechanics, we were able to get it up and running (nearly) on schedule.”

The lights are on in Sharan



A new power pole and power lines are silhouetted against the evening sky in Sharan, Afghanistan. The new power grid was built by local contractors and paid for by the Sharan Provincial Reconstruction Team. It serves 200 shops, a 24-room hospital, and 700 homes and runs the street lights.

Joseph Weeks, the KBR generator mechanic who provided the helpful advice, understands the difference that this power grid is making for the community.

“We essentially brought them into the 20th century with the flick of a switch,” he said. “I wouldn’t go so far as to say that they’ve reached the 21st century yet, but they’re getting there.”

Yousuf Khusti, a general contractor who has an office in

Sharan, sees the power grid as a huge step toward progress for the town.

“Everybody is very happy about the grid,” said Khusti through an interpreter. “Sharan is the commercial center of the Paktika Province. The town is more modern now with power, as it should be. This is a very backward province, but the power grid is bringing us forward.”

Among the benefits that the

locals will experience from having a power grid are savings on petrol they have been using to fuel personal generators, said Khusti.

“Soon I can hook up my computer and radio in my office,” said Khusti, who is not yet hooked up to the grid, but plans to be soon.

As with all PRT projects, the question of sustainability by the new Afghan government must be addressed before the project can be started.

“The contractor has 800 electricity meters for those people who would like to have electricity hooked up to their business or home,” said Borden. “All government buildings, including the hospital, will have meters automatically installed.”

The meters will help the government to keep track of usage and to charge its customers accordingly to pay for the 100 liters per hour that the generator will burn when it is running at max capacity.

The generator can supply enough power to expand the town of Sharan to five times its current size, Weeks said.

“We’ve designed the system to last for well into the future.”

To keep people from illegally hooking up electricity to their homes or businesses, the lines will be checked once a month. If violators are found, they will be charged for their usage, the lines will be disconnected, and they could also be fined.

The generator producing the power will also be guarded 24 hours a day to prevent anyone from pillaging its parts or sabotaging the power supply.

LTF 307 gives vital support



Sgt. Pablo Colon, LTF 307 healthcare specialist, gives Spc. Frances Miles a checkup during sick call at Forward Operating Base Salerno Sept. 28. Sick call is just one of the many responsibilities that fall on the shoulders of Charlie Company.

LTF from Page 6

and give a unit out of Germany a chance to earn their combat patches.

“This truck company said ‘hey we’re available to deploy and we are coming,’” said Danwin. “So we got a platoon from the 69th Transportation Company. It gives them the opportunity for a bunch of non-airborne personnel to be going to war with the 82nd guys, so that’s good for them.”

The troops from the 69th are busy driving on the rugged Afghan roads transporting equipment and Coalition and Afghan army personnel.

“It’s been great working with the 82nd,” said Cpl.

Holly Princevalle, a mechanic from the 69th Transportation Company.

The Afghan countryside and roads, or lack thereof pose challenges for the troops though and keeps them busy.

“As far as maintenance goes, the Afghan roads are rough and there are only a couple of us down here from the company to take care of a whole fleet of trucks,” Princevalle said. “So we’ve been getting used to working through the long hours.”

“Probably the biggest thing we’ve brought besides a bunch of motivated paratroopers is we’ve allowed the maneuver battalions not

to worry about logistics and to concentrate on the fight,” Danwin said in reference to the task force’s mission in Afghanistan.

For the next six months the troops of LTF 307 will continue to provide the support needed to accomplish the mission in Eastern Afghanistan. As the harsh Afghan winter sets in, LTF 307 will have the needed supplies and assets in place to ensure the troops are taken care of.

“We do a lot of leaning forward in logistics,” Danwin said. “We are the logistics experts for the maneuver guys so they can go out and kill the enemy. We are getting them what they need to do that even before they think about it.”

Regional Command South / Task Force Bayonet

1/325 improvises way through Mianashin

Story and photos
by Spc. Mike
Pryor
1/325th Public
Affairs

MIANASHIN – Alpha Company's air-drop of supplies in the morning had fallen far from the mark, leaving water bottles and boxes of food strewn for hundreds of yards across the mountains. The paratroopers had spent the afternoon carrying box after box down from the ridgeline, but there were still several large loads that needed to be transported. With daylight rapidly disappearing, A Co seemed to have run out of options.

Luckily, that's when the Donkey Man showed up.

Spc. Daniel Boyle spotted the old man as he led a team of donkeys up a hill in the distance. With a flash of inspiration, Boyle realized the donkeys might be the solution to A Co's transportation problem. He beckoned the man over and began to negotiate. They quickly reached an agreement, and before long, each donkey was loaded up with an enormous bundle of supplies and ready to move out.

Staff Sgt. Matthew Sheppard mounted the lead donkey. He slung his weapon on his back and gave a gentle jab with his heels to spur the animal forward. As the donkey started trotting off, a sudden thought occurred to Sheppard.

"Hey, how do I make it stop?" he hollered.

But by that time the unlikely convoy was already on the move.

As the incident with the donkeys shows, "adapt and overcome" was the strategy on display when paratroopers from Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry Regiment and counterparts from the Afghan National Army conducted a five-day operation in the Mianashin region north of Kandahar in early October. The operation resulted in the arrests of three Taliban leaders and the destruction of two enemy safe-houses.

"On a mission like that, you never know what situation you're going to find yourself in. That's why we just try to stay flexible and make the most out of whatever breaks we get," said Capt. Michael Shaw, A Co's commander.

The operation began with a pre-dawn air assault into the town of Lwar Kowndalan Oct. 1.

Two Chinook helicopters with an Apache gunship for support deposited the paratroopers in a clearing just outside the village. The paratroopers flung themselves out of the Chinooks into a wall of dirt and dust kicked up by the propeller blades. The helicopters took off seconds later and as the dust settled, the paratroopers could see they had landed in a graveyard.

They moved out quickly and encircled the town by squads. Their



Paratroopers work together to deflate the canopy of a parachute used to air drop supplies to their location in the Mianashin region in Oct. 3.



Afghan and U.S. soldiers use donkeys to transport air-dropped supplies to their base Oct. 3.



Pfc. Nate Miller pulls security after an air assault Oct. 1.



Spc. Ronald Turner searches caves for signs of Taliban presence Oct. 4.



Staff Sgt. Phillip Velasquez provides over-watch protection while his platoon search a village in Mianashin Oct. 1.



Paratroopers load suspected Taliban prisoners onto a Chinook transport helicopter to be taken in for questioning Oct. 2.

objective was to capture several high-ranking Taliban operatives known to live in the village. With the ANA leading the way, they searched several houses and in no time had taken three enemy captive.

They were also on the lookout for a safe-house used by Taliban forces in the area. After several hours, Shaw decided to set up a patrol base from which to continue the search. He chose a high-walled, fortress-like compound surrounded by orchards. Ironically, soon after occupying the building, the paratroopers realized it was actually the safe-house they were looking for.

The next day, after loading the three detained enemy onto a Chinook for transport to a secure location, the company moved out on a punishing hike through the mountains to the town of

Gardeneh. The sun beat down mercilessly as they trudged along, sliding on the shale-covered hillsides and getting snagged in tangled thorn thickets. It was only a two-mile hike, but with the heat and the altitude, it felt more like 20.

The village lay on top of a hill at the foot of a cluster of immense boulders. A search of the homes failed to turn up any evidence of Taliban presence, but one old man did inform the paratroopers that approximately 50 Taliban fighters had recently moved through the area. Shaw had

his men set up an observation point at the old man's house in hopes that the enemy might pass by again that night.

While they waited for night to fall, another problem presented itself - The paratroopers were al-

most entirely out of food and water. They would have to live off the land. They paid the old man to butcher one of his goats and drank water from his well after purifying it with iodine tablets.

Late that night they sat around the fire eating broiled goat meat with their hands and drinking sweet Chai tea.

"What part is this?" asked one paratrooper warily as he fished a hunk of goat meat out of the pot.

"Don't ask. Just eat," someone answered.

Later, when most of his men were in their sleeping bags or on guard,

See ASSAULT Page9

Regional Command South / Task Force Bayonet

5-day air assault mission sends 325th on donkey convoy

ASSAULT from Page 8

Shaw went to sit by the old man's side to thank him for the hospitality. Knowing the Taliban would harm the old man if they knew he had helped U.S. forces, Shaw asked the man for a strange favor.

"I want you to lie to them. Don't tell them you helped us," he said.

In the morning the company hiked several miles further out to search another compound, then circled back and made the journey all the way back to their base in Lwar Kowndalan to await re-supply.

From the roof of their compound, the paratroopers saw the C-130 fly over and crates of food and water attached to green parachutes came tumbling out of the plane's hold. Sheppard's squad was dispatched to retrieve the supplies. Hours later, he came riding back into the compound on the back of a donkey, leading the rest of his improvised convoy behind him.

"Cool! War donkeys!" exclaimed Pvt. Adam Richter.

The re-supply had also included humanitarian aid supplies for the local people. All afternoon and



An Apache helicopter provides air support while paratroopers of 325th AIR, move into position after air assaulting into Lwar Kowndalan to start a five-day mission.

into the evening the villagers filed into the compound one by one to receive rice, beans, sugar, tools, radios, and other supplies. The paratroopers did their best to distribute the material according to need, but everyone seemed to be equally needy.

"Ask him how many people are in his family," 1st Lt. Sean McDonough, the company's executive officer, told his interpreter as one boy approached to receive his portion of the supplies.

"He says he has five brothers and five sisters," the interpreter said.

"Oh brother," sighed

McDonough.

Operations continued the next day as the platoon discovered another abandoned safe-house and several caves that had been used as shelters or staging points for ambushes. Using mortar fire, M136 anti-tank missiles, and hand grenades, the paratroopers destroyed them all.

A Co was due to be exfiltrated by Chinook helicopters just after sunrise Oct. 5. But before they could leave, there was one last piece of unfinished business – the compound they had been living in. Rather

than leave it intact for the Taliban to use, Shaw gave the order to destroy the building and the remaining supplies in it with claymore mines.

Staff Sgt. Richard Eldridge emplaced the mines, setting one inside a room in which someone had scrawled some fitting graffiti: "Up Yours Taliban," it read.

When everything was set, Eldridge crouched down just outside the gates of the compound and detonated the mines. There was a tremendous blast and then a cloud of smoke and dust came drifting out of the

gates. Poking his head inside, Eldridge saw that the explosion had split the main building straight down the middle. The compound's days as a safe haven for Taliban fighters were over.

The paratroopers moved out to the pickup zone. Soon they heard the WHUPWHUPWHUP of the incoming Chinooks, and less than 45 minutes later they were back at Kandahar Airfield, looking forward to a well-earned day of hot chow, hot showers, and sleep on comfortable mattresses. And no more donkeys.

Hispanic achievements honored at KAF

Story by Spc. Jon H. Arguello

173rd Airborne Brigade Public Affairs

KANDAHAR AIR FIELD – More than 50 people attended a ceremony Sept. 30 in Fraise Chapel on Kandahar Airfield celebrating the contribution Hispanics have made to American culture and progress. Three guest speakers spoke about their Latino experiences and demonstrated the diversity within the Hispanic community.

After a benediction, a slide show was presented highlighting the numerous milestones that have been reached by Hispanics. Once the presentation was complete, the three guest speakers each made their speech.

Some of the achievements included more than a dozen Medal of Honor recipients, including Al Rascon, who served with the 173rd Airborne Brigade in Vietnam. Also mentioned in one of the speeches was Lt. Gen. Ricardo Sanchez, currently serving as the V Corps commander.

"These events educate people about our success and our struggles," said guest speaker Spc. Kelly Cruz, from Texas City, Texas. "There are a lot of Hispanic people who don't know about the achievements

Latinos have made, so how would the military know?"

These types of events aren't just important for the minorities that they celebrate but for everyone to have exposure to the culture of the respective cultures they focus on.

"I don't think it's about a month, it should be for the whole year," Cruz said. "The culture is too big to understand its scope in one month. I don't mean just Hispanic heritage month, I mean across the board."

The celebration of Hispanic Achievements was successful as many Hispanics and non-Hispanics alike left the chapel with more knowledge than they came in with.

"Sponsoring a successful special or ethnic observance is both challenging and rewarding," said Master Sgt. Terry Schneider, the events planner from Fayetteville, N.C. "These obser-

vances provide commanders an opportunity to enhance the human relations climate through increased unity, awareness, and

mutual understanding of the accomplishments and contributions of all members of the Army."

Everyone involved benefited from the event. Hispanic or not, the presentation and guest speakers reminded everyone present just how important the day was and how much Hispanic people contribute to the

American way of life.

"I had no idea that so many Hispanics have been awarded the Medal of Honor," said Pfc. Leslie Angulo, from Bogota, Columbia, the combat camera photographer from the 55th Signal Brigade who photographed the event. "It's good to see someone make a name for themselves by doing something good. It's inspiring."



Sgt. 1st Class Paul Caballero from Alpha Detachment 249th General Hospital welcomes Soldiers attending the Hispanic Heritage Month ceremony on Kandahar Airfield, Sept. 30. (U.S. Army photo by Pfc. Leslie Angulo, Combat Camera)

What's Happening / News You Can Use

Help Louisiana, Mississippi military families affected by Hurricane Katrina

Citizens Helping Heroes announced today that it has launched a targeted campaign to help the families of National Guardsmen currently deployed who have been left homeless by Hurricane Katrina. Monies raised will go directly to the families of those service members deployed overseas, who live in the Gulf Region.

To donate or for more information, visit: www.citizenshelpingheroes.org

In Louisiana and Mississippi, the states hit hardest by the hurricane, up to 40 percent of their National Guard troops are on active duty in Iraq.

While the National Guard at home has been taking part in rescue operations and law enforcement, some 6,000 members of the Louisiana and Mississippi Guard have been forced to watch the catastrophe from 7,000 miles away in Iraq.

As Americans largely focus on the civilian families devastated by Hurricane Katrina, CHH wants to ensure that families of those so bravely fighting on our behalf are supported.

The organization is encouraging citizens to remember that Katrina is an added hardship to military families already facing financial and emotional difficulties.

Info on hurricane assistance

MILITARY ONESOURCE: 1-800-342-9647 Any military members or families in need of counseling services or Red Cross Armed Forces Emergency Service Centers may call the Military OneSource number above or visit their website www.militaryonesource.com.

MILITARY FAMILY LOCATOR: 1-888-777-7731 The web site www.MilitaryFamilyLocator.org has been set up to collect status and location information from military family members affected and/or displaced by Hurricane Katrina.

Submit your unit's story to The Patriot

Tell the whole CJOA what your unit is doing.

The Patriot is always on the lookout for amateur journalists and photographers who have a story to tell.

Send your stories to:

schultea@cjtf76.centcom.mil.

Stand alone photos are also welcome.

Remember when submitting stories and photos to remember the five W's of journalism: who, what, where, when and why.

Also include full names, rank and units of troops involved and of the author.

Stories will be edited for content and to meet journalistic standards.

Free Stuff! The Patriot will feature a web site per issue which offers free stuff for service members.

Free gifts and care packages

<https://www.treatsfortroops.com/registration/index.php>

For free shipping/packing material for your family to send you stuff

http://www.defenselink.mil/news/Nov2004/n11232004_2004112312.html



COMBINED FEDERAL CAMPAIGN—OVERSEAS

...Making a World of Difference

That time of year again! You can make a difference!

Preparations for the Department of Defense 2005 combined Federal Campaign Overseas (CFC-O) are underway.

Canvassing overseas organization requires advance planning to effectively manage numerous administrative and logistical CFC challenges.

The biggest challenges this year is that CFC-O will again include the deployed forces in CENTCOM's area of operation. Per DoDI number 5035.5, CFC-O will include all members of the Armed Forces and DoD civilian employees assigned to organizations and units of the above DoD combatant commands and activities, including those who are deployed due to the presence of United States forces overseas and temporary, part-time or intermittent personnel, who are located overseas.

This year's campaign will run from Oct. 17 through Dec. 15.

To visit the CFC Homepage, go to www.cfcoverseas.org.



The points of contact for CJTF-76's CFC-Overseas Campaign is Sgt. Maj. Donald Johnson, Component Campaign Manager for CFC-O, at 231-4101, Johnson@cjtf76.centcom.mil, and Staff Sgt. Susanna Chavez, Project Officer for CFC-O, at 231-4023, chavez@cjtf76.centcom.mil.

The CFC Story

With a tradition of commitment through the selfless efforts of federal employees the CFC has its roots in the many charitable campaigns of the early 1960s. Seeing a need to bring the diversity of fundraising efforts under one umbrella, federal employees created the CFC one campaign, once a year. By allowing employees to select organizations of their choice from a single brochure and to make their contributions through payroll deductions, the CFC opened the door to more opportunities for generous giving to literally hundreds of worthy causes. An executive order made the CFC a reality, and turned an innovative idea into a uniquely effective way for federal employees to help those in need across our community and throughout the world. The CFC is the only authorized solicitation of employees in the federal work-place on behalf of charitable organizations. It continues to be the largest and most successful work-place fundraising model in the world.